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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2219

June 27, 1985

## AUSTRALIAN WHEAT TO CHINA

Australia reportedly has sold 400,000 tons of wheat to China for delivery in 1985, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This brings total Chinese purchases of Australian wheat to about 1 million tons this calendar year. China continues to buy Australian wheat despite the expiration of the long-term agreement between the two countries in Dec. 1984.

## LOTS OF WHEAT IN ARGENTINA, TOO

Following an 18 pct. devaluation of the peso, Argentina has increased export taxes on grains by 7-10 pct., thereby negating much of the price advantage gained by the devaluation, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Argentina is forecast to export 7.6 million tons of wheat and 11.7 million tons of coarse grains during the current marketing year.

## EC CHANGING PROGRAM

Recent reports indicate the European Community Commission has dropped its voluntary program to restrain commercial soft wheat and flour exports for 1984/85 to 14 pct. of world trade. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this could signal the EC's intention to return to unrestrained wheat exports in 1985/86, particularly since the EC still has abnormally large intervention stocks (12-15 million tons) and current expectations are for another large wheat harvest in the face of declining world wheat demand.

## QUALITY OF U.S. GRAIN

A team of government and industry grain specialists will visit the USSR in the near future to consult with Soviet officials on the quality of the U.S. grain exports to the USSR, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Topics to be covered by the team include a review of measures for dealing with insect infestation, differences in test results for wet gluten content in wheat, sampling procedures and other aspects of grain quality and inspection.

## SURPLUS WHEAT IN INDIA

India's food agency reportedly has stopped buying wheat from farmers, despite a mandate to buy all wheat offered for sale, because government warehouses are full, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Wheat purchases this season total a record 10 million tons, yet farmers still hold up to 7 million tons that will be largely unprotected from monsoon rains. The surplus wheat may eventually be exported and compete with U.S. supplies.

SLOW  
GROWTH

World economic growth will slow to an estimated 3.4 pct. this year, down from 4.3 in 1984, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Growth in the industrialized countries may fall to 3.1 pct. from last year's 4.9, but advance in the developing countries from 3.7 to 4 pct. Global demand for agricultural products may rise with increased growth in developing countries and increased consumer spending in major foreign industrialized nations. The U.S. dollar has stabilized after falling sharply in March and April against the top five currencies important to U.S. agricultural trade. If domestic interest rates continue to decline, the value of the dollar probably will fall.

HOGS &  
PIGS

The inventory of all hogs and pigs in the U.S. on June 1, 1985, is estimated at 52.1 million head, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is 1 pct. below a year ago and 10 pct. below June 1, 1983. U.S. hog producers intend to have 5.6 million sows farrow during the June-Nov. period, a decrease of 4 pct. from the same period in 1984 and 9 pct. below 1983.

MEAT  
PRODUCTION

Commercial red meat production for the U.S. in May 1985 totaled 3.49 billion pounds, up 2 pct. from May 1984, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jan.-May red meat production, at 16.3 billion pounds, was up 1 pct. from last year. The 1985 accumulated production percentage changes by individual components were: Beef, up 2 pct.; veal, up 6 pct.; pork, down slightly; lamb and mutton, down 7 pct.

CATTLE  
DINING

Cattle and calves on feed on June 1 for the slaughter market in the 7 States preparing monthly estimates totaled 7.44 million head, up 2 pct. from both June 1, 1984, and 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Marketings of fed cattle during May totaled 1.59 million, 3 pct. below last year but 1 pct. above May two years ago.

CHANGES IN  
DAIRY  
PROGRAM

The national support price for milk will be reduced from \$12.10 to \$11.60 per hundredweight on July 1, according to Sec'y of Agriculture John Block. Block said, "We have determined that the new support price will assure an adequate supply of wholesome milk to meet current needs." The \$11.60 support price will remain in effect until Sept. 30, 1985, at which time the amendments made by the 1983 Act expire.

AND  
CARDAMON TO  
QATAR

You constantly hear about the export sales of wheat, corn and soybeans...but the U.S. exports other products, too. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, here are some products recently requested by foreign countries: Beet dregs, Bourbon whisky, dried/dehydrated edible blood or plasma, duck/goose liver pate, ewes and rams, exotic birds, exotic fruits, snow crab claws, frozen yellow croaker, fur skins, live pet animals including prairie dogs and flying squirrels, ox gallstones, purebred swans, wild ginseng, racing horses, snails, and white, headless Gulf shrimp. Who said agriculture has to be dull?

FROM OUR  
TELEVISION  
SERVICE

WIND EROSION IN GREAT PLAINS...Winds damaged 8.5 million acres in the Great Plains during the last seven months - one-third fewer than last year. Bobby Birdwell with USDA's Soil Conservation Service focuses on factors contributing to this situation. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (411)

AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK...USDA economist Herb Moses takes a look at the current agricultural outlook including forecasts for crop production, cash income projections, net farm income and exports. Vic Powell interviews. (412)

MAJOR ISSUES IN TRANSPORTATION - I...Martin Fitzpatrick, chief of USDA's Office of Transportation, describes the current status of our transportation system, and talks about the impact of rail deregulation on agriculture. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (413)

MAJOR ISSUES IN TRANSPORTATION - II...Martin Fitzpatrick, chief of USDA's Office of Transportation, continues his discussion on current issues facing the transportation system, including cargo preference and the Conrail barge sale. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (414)

VEGETABLES - AN ALTERNATIVE TO GRAIN...Barry Kleiss, an Illinois vegetable farmer, describes how vegetable crops can provide economic relief for grain farmers. Grear Kimmel interviews. (415)

WORLD FOOD  
NEEDS

During 1985/86, 69 developing countries will require 11.3 million tons of food above normal commercial imports to maintain consumption at existing levels. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this is about 400,000 tons less than assessed needs for 1984/85. To meet minimal nutritional standards, the 69 countries will need an additional 19.5 million tons of food. Stock rebuilding would require an additional 1.3 million tons for status quo needs, and 20.6 million for nutritional needs. However, because of physical restraints, the countries will be able to absorb only an estimated 17.9 million tons.

CHINA EXPORTS  
TO STAY HIGH

In 1985, China's farm exports will continue to rise and its imports will drop further, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Exports of corn, cotton, soybeans, and soymeal will remain in competition with U.S. goods, particularly in Asian markets. China's purchases of wheat are falling, and U.S. agricultural exports to China will be the lowest since 1977. Last year China became an important exporter of corn, cotton, soybeans and soymeal, but rapid development of the livestock sector may cut into exports as domestic demand for corn, soybeans and meal increases.

FARM PRODUCTION  
EXPENDITURES

In 1984, farm production expenditures totaled \$128.3 billion, down 2.3 pct. from the \$131.3 billion in 1983, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Lower prices for replacement livestock along with inventory reductions resulted in major expenditure decreases for feed and livestock. Farm services including land rental represented the largest portion of the total production expenditure, 18 pct. Feed accounted for 14 pct. of the total. Purchases of livestock and poultry accounted for 11 pct.



OFF MIKE

Gary Wulf reports he is now the farm director at KZEN radio in Central City, NE. He had been at KFRM, Salina, KS, and left when the station was sold. Actually we should say he will be the farm director at KZEN since Gary reports they are still in the process of building the station. Air date is targeted for the next couple weeks ... We were sorry to hear that Sue Rankin died, June 9. She was the wife of Charlie Rankin (KURV, Edinburg, TX). They had been married 35 years ... We also learned that Wayne Jenkin's (Ag Day, Indianapolis, IN) mother died. She was 90 years old. After the funeral, Wayne said they had gathered for a family meal together and received a phone call from his daughter's in-laws with a "minor" problem. They had 24 gilts ready to farrow and some had decided to do so early. Wayne said they all changed their clothes and went over to help out. As he put it, "Bringing life into the world at that time was good" ... Lee Bullis is retiring from Allen & Dorward, Houston, TX, but he's really not retiring from active participation in things agriculture. Beginning July 1, Lee is the newly appointed agricultural marketing director for McGavren Guild. He will continue to operate out of Houston ... We get the report that for the 18th consecutive year, WIBW Television produced its spotlight program about Kansas' seven district FFA Star Farmers, "Seven Stars over Kansas." WIFB Farm Director Kelly Lenz hosted the half-hour program.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1465...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Who's really in control of your garden...you or insects? In this edition of Agriculture USA, George Holmes discusses the problem homeowners have controlling insects not only on shrubs but also in their garden. University of Maryland Extension Agent Stan Gill gives some helpful tips on what to do when you're attacked by bugs.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1454...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Conservation reserve; Farms in space; Tobacco as a food.

CONSUMER TIME #947...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) Insect wars; Re-seeding your lawn; Home grown fertilizer; Home safety for "latchkey" children; Weightlifting and your diet.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Tues, July 2, Dairy products, Weekly weather; Tues, July 9, Weekly crop and weather; Wed, July 10, U.S. crop production, World ag. supply/demand, grain stocks. (A REMINDER--This listing only covers reports and events we know about in advance. Just because we don't list any items for a particular day, doesn't mean that we aren't putting new items on that day. We change our newslines every day, Monday-Friday.) Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

  
JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief  
Radio-Television Division